



June 2015

THE COURIER

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Portsmouth, Va.



NMCP Earns Blue "H"
Award — Page 9

BHC Oceana Welcomes New Leadership during Change of Charge

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
REBECCA A. PERRON
NMCP Public Affairs

Cmdr. Laurence Kuhn relieved Cmdr. Cyrus N. Rad as officer in charge of the Branch Health Clinic Oceana Triad June 12, during a ceremony presided over by Capt. Darin K. Via, Naval Medical Center Portsmouth commanding officer.

The triad consists of BHC Oceana at Naval Air Station Oceana, BHC Dam Neck at the Dam Neck Annex and the TRICARE Prime Virginia Beach Clinic.

Since Rad became OIC three years ago, the nearly 400 staff of the triad have provided comprehensive medical and dental care to 37,000 beneficiaries, with 200,000 outpatient visits annually. Improvements were made to scheduling templates, the enrollment process and expanded appointment hours. While enrollment increased by 6,000 beneficia-

ries, more than 9,000 appointments per year were recaptured, and the patient satisfaction rate has been maintained at 97 percent.

"When you are blessed to lead as many talented folks as I have, it's impossible to thank everyone for the countless ways they serve hundreds and thousands of patients daily," Rad said. "My active duty staff is the heart of the organization. My civil service staff is the foundation of the organization and the contract staff is the hard-working strong hands. A triad of personnel and a triad of clinics with a single purpose."

During his tenure, Rad pushed the tracking, monitoring and improving of



Cmdr. Cyrus Rad salutes Cmdr. Laurence Kuhn as he prepares to transfer charge of Branch Health Clinic Oceana to Kuhn.

medical readiness for 58 tenant commands, which resulted in an increase in medical readiness from 65 percent to 81 percent in 90 days. He also worked to create partnerships with base and community agencies, combining resources during annual emergency management and disaster drills.

"Cmdr. Rad took the clinic's participation to the next level — his

— See OCEANA, Page 3

Dental Residency Programs Graduate 14 Dentists

STORY AND PHOTOS BY REBECCA A. PERRON
NMCP Public Affairs

The residents of the two dental residency programs at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth graduated June 12, marking the completion of a year of treating patients after dental school.

The Advanced Education in General Dentistry program graduated 10 residents, while the General Practice Residency program graduated four. AEGD is clinically based, while GPR is hospital based.

During the ceremony, class mentors and the director of Dental

Services, Cmdr. Raynese Fikes, spoke about the importance of their training and the impact they will make on their patients. Capt. Matthew Pommer, Navy Medicine East chief of staff and member of the Navy Dental Corps, was the keynote speaker.

"You are now part of something much bigger than yourselves," Pommer said. "You are part of 240 years of Navy history and Navy tradition, and 103 years of Dental Corps history... part of the elite one percent who serves their country. You get to practice ideal dentistry on the men and women who serve this country."

— See DENTAL, Page 7

Save the Date

Upcoming Fleet and Family Support Center Workshops

Fleet and Family Support Center at NMCP is located in Bldg. 249 next to the Child Wait Center. Workshops are open to active duty, retirees, dependents and DoD civilians. Child care is available if arranged in advance. Call 953-7801 or email amanda.burbage.ctr@navy.mil to register.

Developing Your Spending Plan

The Developing Your Spending Plan workshop is July 14 from 10 – 11:30 a.m. Do you want to get control of your financial life? This single-session workshop can help you develop a realistic spending plan. With this spending plan in place, you'll be on your way to paying your bills on time and achieving your short and long-term financial goals.

Couples Workshop

The Couples Workshop is July 16 and 23 from 2 – 4:30 p.m. Do you have trouble communicating with your partner? Do you find yourselves arguing a lot? This two-session workshop will help you improve your day-to-day communication, learn how to fight fair, problem-solve, and strengthen your relationship. Open to military beneficiaries and their partners.

TSP – Your Key To Financial Independence

The Thrift Savings Plan workshop is July 21 from 10 – 11:30 a.m. TSP provides all service members with the opportunity to get an immediate tax break while saving for their and their family's future. Learn how to take advantage of this exciting government-sponsored savings and investment program to build wealth and achieve financial independence in this ninety-minute workshop.

Building Effective Anger Management Skills

The BEAMS workshop is Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Aug. 3 – 14 from 1 – 3 p.m. Do you find your anger racing from zero to 60 at work or at home? BEAMS is a six-session, skill-building program for active duty and retired personnel and their adult family members ages 18 and older. The BEAMS course is designed to prevent anger from escalating to violence. Participants learn to develop new and effective coping strategies.

Personal Communications

The Personal Communications workshop is Aug. 7 from 9 – 10:30 a.m. Would you like to improve your personal communication skills? Participants learn about different communication styles, conflict resolution, and ways to develop more effective speaking and listening skills. Open to active-duty military and family members.

Love Thinks

The Love Thinks workshop is Aug. 7 from 10:30 a.m. – noon. Are you tired of the same dating traps like becoming involved too quickly, dishonesty from the start, or overlooking problem areas? Learn how to avoid common dating missteps when developing a new romance by attending "Love Thinks," a program for single or newly-dating military members.

Oakleaf Club Open to New Members

The Oakleaf Club of Tidewater is open to Medical, Dental, Nurse and Medical Service Corps active and retired officers and their spouses in Hampton Roads. The club is a charitable organization benefiting the Hampton Roads naval medical community. We are happy to welcome new members.

For membership information, email tidewater.oakleaf@gmail.com.

THE COURIER

COMMANDING OFFICER

Capt. Darin K. Via

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Capt. Bradford L. Smith

COMMAND MASTER CHIEF

CMDCM (FMF/SW/AW/DV)

Eric Anderson

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Deborah R. Kallgren

DEPUTY PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Rebecca A. Perron

STAFF JOURNALISTS

MCCS (IDW/EXW/AW)

James Perkins

MC1 (EXW/SW/AW)

Gary Johnson

MC2 (SW) Terah L. Bryant

MC3 Juan A. Salinas-Leon

The Courier is an authorized publication of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, 620 John Paul Jones Cir., Portsmouth, VA 23708, and is published monthly by the Public Affairs Office.

To submit an article or information for publication, contact the Public Affairs Office by calling 953-7986 or emailing the PAO, Deborah Kallgren, at deborah.r.kallgren.civ@mail.mil.

Submissions should be in Word format, with photos submitted separately from the document and in jpeg or tiff format.

The Public Affairs Office is located in Bldg. 1, 3rd Deck, Rm. C308.

KEEP UP WITH THE LATEST NEWS FROM NMCP



www.facebook.com/NMCPortsmouth

Read and download
The Courier in color!



issuu.com/nmcp

ISSUU



www.youtube.com/NMCPortsmouth

twitter.com/NMCP1





Cmdr. Cyrus Rad delivers his remarks during the Branch Health Clinic Oceana Change of Charge.



Guests listen to Cmdr. Laurence Kuhn speak about the opportunity to serve as OIC.

OCEANA — *Continued from page 1*
proactive engagement created an outstanding unity of effort among the clinic personnel, NMCP experts, and community agencies that received accolades throughout the region,” said Capt. Louis J. Schager, NAS Oceana’s commanding officer, during the ceremony. “You and your team of professionals set the bar high. You leave a legacy of superior customer support for thousands of servicemen and women, active and retired, and their families.”

Rad also led the coordination with a local hospital to establish the first-ever mobile emergency room with a 50-bed capacity to support the 2014 Oceana Air Show, which has become a model for major air shows across the country.

During the ceremony, Via reflected on the Triad’s service to the fleet and commended Rad for his accomplishments.

“Standing in this hangar, with this magnificent F/A-18 to my left, I am reminded why Navy Medicine is here – to bring quality care to the patients entrusted to us,” Via said. “(Through that care), Cmdr. Rad delivered outstanding results, but more importantly, he did so in the face of unprecedented change and challenges, which is what makes Cmdr. Rad’s accomplish-



Cmdr. Cyrus Rad receives a Meritorious Service Medal from Capt. Darin K. Via for his accomplishments during his three years as officer in charge.

ments that much more impressive. He makes it look easy, but don’t be fooled. His blood, sweat and tears will remain with us. Thank you for leading with strength, stamina, skill, foresight and patience.”

Turning to Kuhn,

Via welcomed him as officer in charge.

“Cmdr. Kuhn, I am confident you are the right person to step into this role,” Via said. “I look forward to your continued leadership here.”

Kuhn, a former senior medical officer at BHC Oceana and a former flight surgeon, is looking forward to continuing to serve and be a part of the aviation community.

“Our obligation is always to provide the best care to our patients,” said Kuhn, a family medicine physician. “Communication and training are the key components to delivering that care and we will continue to push forward in

those areas.”

Rad was presented a Meritorious Service Medal for improving the quality and standard of care for the triad’s patients, as well as his work with base and local agencies to improve medical readiness and emergency response. His next assignment will be to resume providing patient care as an optometrist at Naval Health Clinic Hawaii in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.



Cmdr. Laurence Kuhn enjoys a light moment during his remarks.



Staff from Branch Health Clinic Oceana attend the Change of Charge ceremony.

Ostrofe Commissioned into Medical Corps, Becomes Ensign for Third Time

STORY AND PHOTOS BY REBECCA A. PERRON
NMCP Public Affairs

Lt. Shaun Ostrofe raised his right hand, recited the oath of office, and was commissioned into the Medical Corps as an ensign during a June 3 ceremony. Changing career paths for the second time during his eight-year Navy career, Ostrofe is on his way to fulfilling his dream of becoming a doctor.

Moments earlier, Ostrofe's lieutenant and Medical Service Corps collar devices had been ceremoniously removed by Cmdr. Matthew Case, the director for Administration at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, who remarked about the time the two worked together.

"It's been an absolute pleasure," Case said. "As a junior officer, you're one of the best I've worked with. You are smart and have a lot of drive and you will be very successful. I know that commanding officer tour is in your future. Just keep leading wherever you are and in whatever you do."

His new collar devices were pinned on by his wife, Lt. Amy Ostrofe. Then, Capt. Darin K. Via, commanding officer, commended him for his accomplishments and his decision to pursue becoming a doctor.

"It's encouraging, it's an honor, and it's a privilege that you decided once again to switch career paths and be a Medical Corps officer," Via said. "It's great that the Navy recognized your talent. That's the most exciting thing about today. You'll do great at medical school, and we look forward to the day that



Cmdr. Matthew Case, director for Administration, ceremoniously removes the Medical Service Corps insignia from Lt. Shaun Ostrofe's collar as his wife, Lt. Amy Ostrofe, watches.

you come back. I can't wait to see what you've accomplished at the end of your career."

Ostrofe's goal for the past 10 years has been to attend medical school, although his studies at the U.S. Naval Academy began as an economics major.

"I choose the Naval Academy because my grandfathers served in the military, and I hoped to play lacrosse at the academy, which I did my freshman year," Ostrofe said. "I was an economics major, but I also took as many pre-med classes as my schedule allowed. When I graduated in 2007, I was assigned to USS Normandy in Norfolk."

Aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy, Ostrofe served as ordnance officer and fire control officer, and he earned the designation as a surface warfare officer. He deployed with the ship while it served as the flag ship of Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 and completed NATO's first circumnavigation of Africa in support of Operation Active Endeavor. In 2009, he served as the Plans, Operations and Medical Intelligence officer for the fleet surgeon at U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

"I really enjoyed doing surface warfare, and I loved being a division officer, but I knew that wasn't going to be my career," Ostrofe said. "A mentor of mine at the time suggested that with my business background, I become a Medical Service Corps officer. I applied for it and was accepted for lateral transfer."

Although Ostrofe had been promoted to lieutenant junior grade, his redesignation into a different corps in 2009 meant becoming an ensign again. He was selected for duty under instruction at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, where he completed the Joint Medical Executive Skills Institutes Program and TRICARE Financial Management Education Program Executive Course.

In 2011, he completed a yearlong administrative fellowship at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, and



Capt. Darin Via, commanding officer, right, delivers the Oath of Office to Ensign Shaun Ostrofe as he is commissioned into the Medical Corps.

— See **OSTROFE**, next page

NMCP's Emergency Medicine Residents Graduate

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MC₂ (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Emergency Medicine Residency Program Class of 2015 celebrated their graduation ceremony June 24, marking the completion of three years of hard work, long hours, sacrifice and service for the residents.

During the ceremony, Army Col. J. Dave Barry, Residency Program director, explained to guests some of the differences between civilian and military residency requirements, as well as the environments in which these doctors will treat their patients.

"Working in an uncontrolled environment is how most view emergency medicine," Barry said. "The military has a different understanding of what uncontrolled situations are. We work under fire on the battle field, in aircraft with turbulence or in the tight space of ship on rough ships."

While civilian counterparts are required to perform 35 trauma resuscitations, graduates are required to complete more than 100 trauma resuscitations to be labeled as efficient.

According to Barry, the average civilian resident has 23 specific emergency medicine milestones to complete, but the graduates had additional officer and leadership milestones that are the equivalent to seasoned faculty positions in civilian hospitals.



Army Col. J. Dave Barry, Emergency Medicine Residency Program director, explains to guests that this ceremony marks three years of hard work, long hours, sacrifice and service for the residents.

"Serving our nation's protectors is a defining feature; it's truly a higher calling that requires high expectations," Barry said. "Our goal is to train to a higher standard. They are expected to perform the highest care possible in austere, unpredictable conditions."

Cmdr. Michael Juliano, Emergency Medicine Department head, commented on how rewarding it is to work in the emergency room, and asked the graduates to never stop learn-

— See **ER GRAD**, Page 15

OSTROFE — *Continued from previous page*

Master's Degrees in Healthcare Administration and Business Administration from Baylor University. During the fellowship, he was the Medical Evaluations Boards division officer.

Ostrofe reported to the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman in 2012, where he served as the medical administration officer and Carrier Task Force-50 deputy surgeon. He was responsible for a \$6.3 million supply inventory and 60 personnel. During a nine-month deployment, he coordinated more than 100 medical evacuations.

While assigned to NMCP, Ostrofe served as the POMI officer, overseeing deployment readiness, platform assignments and the Command Independent Augmentee Coordinator program.

Ostrofe will attend medical school at Liberty University, and after graduation in four years, he hopes to complete his internship year at NMCP. He has not decided yet what kind of doctor he wants to be, but he is excited about this next step in his career.

"You never truly stop learning, so now I can dedicate my day to that, instead of just an hour or so," Ostrofe said. "The Navy

has been really great to my wife and me. With a little bit of luck, good mentorship from the right people and a lot of hard work, the Navy will let you pursue your desired career."



Lt. Amy Ostrofe pins the new Medical Corps insignia onto Ensign Shaun Ostrofe's collar.

Virginia Senator Tours NMCP

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
REBECCA A. PERRON
NMCP Public Affairs

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine visited Naval Medical Center Portsmouth May 27 to see firsthand the work of staff as they provide health care to service members, veterans and their families in Hampton Roads. Kaine's visit was part of a four-day whirlwind tour of the state and his first at the medical center since he became an elected official.

The visit began with an extensive conversation with Capt. Darin Via, commanding officer, about numerous aspects of providing care at a tertiary medical center, from graduate medical education and research programs to the number of staff and span of branch health clinics throughout the region.

"More than anything, we wanted to showcase the capabilities and capacity of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth," Via said. "Being one of the largest tertiary care medical centers in Navy Medicine, many times, while people recognize there is a Navy hospital here, but I don't think they quite understand the scope, size and complexity of the organization. I think the areas we took him through really highlighted that."

"It's very important for me, being on the Armed Services Committee, that every time I travel around there is

something in Virginia that I haven't seen yet, that I need to see," Kaine said. "While I have spent a good amount of time at VA (hospitals), I have not been to this hospital. I wanted to get a sense of patient care and the incredible work done by over 7,000 people who work here. The technology, the atmosphere - I had a good tour."

The first stop on the tour included a brief about new technology and capabilities in the Women's Imaging Center and general operations in the Radiology Department. Next was the operating room, where Kaine was shown the DaVinci robotic surgical suite. He sat at the console of the DaVinci trainer, learning how a surgeon is able to see the field of surgery through cameras and can maneuver surgical instruments through robotic controls.

In the Warrior Recovery Services Clinic, Kaine heard about the latest treatments offered to patients in need of specialized mental health care.

"Most interesting was hearing about mental health issues and different ways they're trying to approach mental health treatment; that's something we spend a lot of time talking about on the Armed Services Committee," Kaine said. "Are

we doing things the right way or not? So hearing some of the strategies on how to do that, that was important."

The last stop was the Healthcare Simulation Center, where the staff had on display dozens of pieces of equipment that health



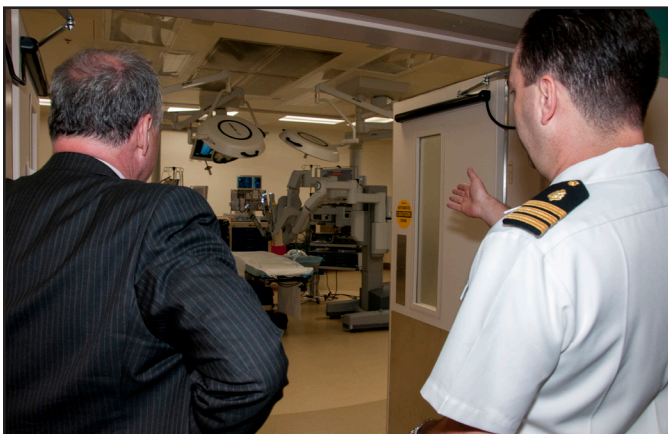
Cmdr. Michael Spooner, director of the Healthcare Simulation and Bioskills Center, discusses the variety of training capabilities provided by the Simulation Center.

care professionals - doctors, nurses and corpsmen - use to increase their proficiency in providing patient care.

"The ability of the technical field to use simulation before you do a first procedure means that you're more likely to do it right the first time," Kaine said. "Clearly in this hospital, the training performed by the medical professionals is cutting edge, as they would have at any hospital, but here they have a specific focus on things that are really unique to the military population."

Ultimately, Kaine said his visit will help him better advocate for the medical center as a member of the Senate's Armed Services and Budget committees.

"Spending more time trying to understand the VA system and the military medical system helps me on my Armed Services committee responsibilities to be a better advocate for the needs of medical care within the military," Kaine said. "On the Budget Committee, all these sequester and other budgetary issues pose a challenge within the DOD, especially DOD assignments and installations with a high number of civilians. Again, if I am trying to make my argument to my colleagues about (the budget), it's better to tell them what I've seen and the work that's being done."



Cmdr. Rob Ricca, Operating Room Department head, explains the purpose of equipment in Operating Room 1, which houses the DaVinci robotic surgical system.



Residents from the Advanced Education in General Dentistry and General Practice Residency programs after the graduation ceremony.

cally compromised patients. Dentists who complete the GPR program may later specialize in oral surgery or pediatric dentistry.

"We do a two-month rotation with oral and maxillofacial surgeons," said Lt. Mary Catherine McGinn. "We have a lot of experience with patients who are having jaw surgery to correct deformities. We are also on the wards, seeing patients before and after their surgeries. We are very much a part of the medical surgical team."

The GPR residents were also on call for the emergency room for patients who had facial trauma, which can include fractured teeth or jaws and infection.

"I have a higher confidence in managing dental pain and infection because of the exposure to patients with swelling and other conditions who come to the ER," McGinn said. "I've gained a lot of experience I would not have gotten if I went straight into private practice. I now look at patients more comprehensively."

McGinn said she is prepared to provide many aspects of dental care after being exposed to all aspects of dentistry.

"After completing this comprehensive program, the goal is to go operational and have the experience to treat those patients," McGinn said. "We have had phenomenal mentors who are great in their field. Being around these specialists is really positive for when we are serving in a remote area and won't have access to specialists."

DENTAL — *Continued from page 1*

Pommer emphasized a few points through humor, first handing notepads and pens to the residents to write down "gems and quotes for future reference" since "many speeches are not long remembered." Then he donned a wig and offered advice.

"Always be true to yourself and always be yourself," said Pommer, wearing a curly brunette wig. "The unexamined life is not worth living. Take time to set goals — professional and personal — and make sure you have balance in your life. As you go operational, take care of your ship, shipmates and yourself. We are a team, and we are stronger together."

The programs teach the residents to work as that team, to become naval officers, and to develop their competency and confidence further. The AEGD program expands their skills in providing comprehensive oral care, from basic dental exams to fillings, crowns and bridgework.

"The residency helps the dentist move from the mindset of a student to learning the methods of managing patients," said Lt. Allison Weinberg, AEGD resident. "The experience is challenging and rewarding, especially with the help of great mentors, so we are prepared to provide care to the fleet."

The AEGD residents spent the year treating patients at the Naval Station Norfolk dental clinic, rotating through sick call, oral surgery, endodontics and periodontics.

"During sick call, we triaged patients,

determined the cause of their pain and took the necessary steps to alleviate that pain," Weinberg said. "Oral surgery centered on tooth extractions, where we performed simple and surgical extractions under the oral surgeon's supervision. The endodontics rotation included the prep work leading up to root canals and doing root canals, focusing on diagnosis to determine the level of care. And periodontics is bone and gum health, so we worked with patients to develop treatment plans."

Weinberg said the help of the staff and dental assistants has been instrumental.

"Some of them have 20 years of experience, and their knowledge in dentistry and treatment planning has been invaluable," Weinberg added. "At the beginning, when we're not sure which instruments to use, they'll hand us exactly what we need. They were usually a couple of steps ahead of us."

While the AEGD program focuses on treatment typical of a dental office, the GPR program provides hospital-based training in all dental specialties, and includes familiarization with trauma, medical emergencies, anesthesia and the treatment of medi-



The residents applaud the keynote speaker, Capt. Matthew Pommer, Navy Medicine East chief of staff.

Training Sherlock Would Love: NMCP Nurses Delve Deeper into Evidence-Based Practices

STORY AND PHOTOS BY REBECCA A. PERRON
NMCP Public Affairs

Throughout the country, countless medical researchers work to produce and publish the latest “best practices” to improve health care outcomes. But how can clinicians determine which of these practices will be the best for their patients?

That’s where evidence-based practice comes in and the reason Naval Medical Center Portsmouth hosted the TriService Nursing Research Program Evidence-Based Practice Course June 4 – 5. The course trained about two dozen nurses in the process of identifying undesirable outcomes, assessing medical literature and making recommendations for changes that will improve health care delivery and outcomes.

Undesirable outcomes means there may be better techniques available for the delivery of health care that would improve overall health, minimize discomfort and maximize recovery, such as reducing sore throats in post-operative patients whose airways were maintained with a breathing tube during surgery.

NMCP has completed dozens of such EBP projects, from analyzing morphine usage for post-operative pain control to training milk technicians in the preparation of formula in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

“EBP is a tool that allows you to engage with your practice and with your patient – that you are always looking at and observing the outcomes for your patient,” said Dr. Maggie Richard, the director of Professional Practice, Research and Education at Sinai Hospital in Baltimore, and the lead facilitator of the course. “So when you observe an undesirable outcome, your goal as a registered nurse is to say, ‘I have to intercept the process that’s leading to this outcome and redirect to a better outcome for my patient.’”

Navy, Army and Air Force health care providers from Hampton Roads and beyond attended the course, which included a discussion of the methodology of how to conduct EBP, its historical

evolution and how to develop questions which are important to doing evidence-based practice projects.

“In the course, we review good and poor examples of EBP, which teaches them the effective and efficient steps of the process,” Richard said. “They can become the champion for EBP at their command. They can be a resource to teach their peers the value as well as the process.”



Dr. Maggie Richard, second from left, leads a case study June 5 to discuss possible outcomes using certain health care methods.

Richard challenged each participant to come to the course ready to talk about an issue in their respective area of expertise. The issue could relate to the practice of the nurse or the improvement of outcomes for their patients.

Air Force Capt. Amanda Fulmer, a women’s health nurse practitioner assigned to the hospital at Joint Base-Langley in Hampton, Virginia, came ready to talk about implementing an exercise education program for pregnant patients.

“This is a great way for me to learn about evidence-based research and infuse it into my current program and bring it back to Langley,” Fulmer said. “Some of our patients experience complications such as gestational diabetes because they don’t get enough exercise or gain too much weight. My goal is to develop an education program that explains the benefits of exercise, provides resources and motivates them to exercise, which ultimately will provide healthier outcomes for mom and baby.”

Fulmer is in the data-gathering stage

— See **EBP**, next page



The facilitators of the course (seated) and most of those who attended the TriService Nursing Research Program Evidence-Based Practice Course gather on June 5.

NMCP Delivers Gold Star Care, Earns Blue H Award

By MC2 (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth was among the commands to earn a gold star in the 2014 Blue H - Navy Surgeon General's Health Promotion and Wellness Award.

A gold star Blue H was also awarded to Branch Health Clinic Naval Station Norfolk; branch health clinics Oceana and Adm. Joel T. Boone each received a bronze anchor Blue H.

"As we progress from health care to health, the Blue H Award is the Navy surgeon general's way of identifying those units that are providing outstanding health programs," Capt. Darin K. Via, commanding officer. "With the complexity of care that we do, being recognized for having outstanding health programs is a great accomplishment. This showcases how much our staff is working to ensure we take care of patients when they are sick, but also preventing them from being sick."

The Medical Treatment Facility category recognizes excellence in clinical primary prevention services, community health promotion and medical staff health. Health topics include nutrition, tobacco cessation, weight management, alcohol abuse prevention, injury prevention, physical activity, psychological health and sexual health.

"Winning the award is a reflection of the whole organization's focus on the culture of wellness, and I am glad to be a part of it," said Alice Fitzpatrick, community health specialist and program manager for the ShipShape, Right Weigh and Heart

Health programs.

The Blue H Award is earned at three levels: bronze anchor, silver eagle and gold star. Each command that applies receives at least the bronze anchor. To earn the silver eagle, a command must score at least 50 points in every judged category, and the gold star level requires commands to achieve a minimum of 80 percent of total available points.

Fitzpatrick said that winning the gold star shows that NMCP's programs and services not only meet but exceed the standards in maintaining health and fitness.

"Our programs are evidence-based and



several of our programs have been benchmarked for providing high quality care," Fitzpatrick said.

Fitzpatrick submitted information on her programs and others, showing that NMCP offers awareness and counseling to help promote healthy lifestyles and healthy weight targets for beneficiaries and employees.

"I also submit the 'mNEAT,' which is the nutrition assessment of the hospi-

tal environment," Fitzpatrick said. "This assessment helps us target areas to improve the nutrition environment. We made improvements this year in the availability of more healthy choices in the vending machines and in the Navy Exchange."

In addition to focusing on nutrition and a healthy weight, another topic of interest was tobacco cessation.

As Tobacco Cessation Program manager, Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Mary Frances Sigler turned in a monthly spreadsheet that tracked the daily activities for the month prior - classes, health fairs and appointments - numbers that prove the Wellness Department is reaching staff and beneficiaries. As one of two corpsmen who joined the wellness team in January 2014, Sigler said they aim for at least five patient encounters per day.

"We easily exceeded the five-encounter quota, with a full referral box and multiple programs that were running with the efforts of two nurse educators," Sigler said.

In addition to patient encounters, she counseled tobacco users and weight management patients.

For Sigler, earning the gold star proves that the Wellness Department is effective and changing the command for the better.

"Patients can see this award as recognition for what we are doing and that we are going out of our way to help," Sigler said.

The Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center manages the Blue H recognition program; 342 Navy and Marine Corps active and reserve units received the Blue H Award this year.

EBP — Continued from previous page

of her project. Gathering evidence is a crucial part of the EBP philosophy. According to NMCP's Nursing Research Department head, Cmdr. Craig Cunningham, there's more to it than just grabbing the latest literature off the shelf and using someone else's best practice.

"To provide the best health care outcomes, you must use evidence to drive your practice," Cunningham said. "What we add is that we must also be measuring the change in outcome to make sure that we are getting the outcome the research

demonstrated. When we prove that it's actually the best practice for our patients, it's then that we achieve the culture of EBP that drives patient safety and better outcomes."

By becoming champions of EBP, nurses bring best practices to the patient, and can do so sooner.

"Historically, it takes 15 to 17 years for knowledge to drive practice, so when you pick up a textbook, it's outdated information," Cunningham said. "That's why we started teaching how to find and take the best evidence to the bedside faster, and that's what EBP is all about."

CP-15 Mission Stop in Nicaragua Completed

NMCP Mental Health Team Supports CP-15

By MC1 (SW) AMY KIRK
CP-15 Public Affairs

Nicaraguan residents and officials bid farewell to personnel from USNS Comfort during the Continuing Promise 2015 closing ceremony at Instituto Politecnico Heroes y Martires May 25.

The Comfort team treated more than 7,600 patients at medical outreach sites established at Instituto Politecnico Heroes y Martires and Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius May 19 – 25.

A team of nine mental health professionals from Naval Medical Center Portsmouth embarked aboard Comfort building bonds and sharing information with host nation citizens. They hosted subject matter expert exchanges with host nation mental health professionals and facilitated stress/anger management and sleep hygiene workshops for the ship's crew.

"We exchange information with local mental health



Photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider

CS2 Veno Antoine blocks a goal during a community soccer game with local citizens May 20.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis

Cmdr. Cole Bryan, a pediatric oncologist from NMCP, examines a patient May 19 at a medical site set up at the Instituto Polytechnico Heroes y Martires.

professionals and patients on grief and bereavement counseling, motivational interviewing for change, a method that works on engaging intrinsic motivation within a patient in order to change behavior, family counseling, and marital counseling," explained Lt. Starla Lyles, an NMCP psychiatric resident.

Lt. Cmdr. Amarjeet Purewal, a psychologist, and Lt. Cmdr. Mary Rhodes, a psychiatrist, led SMEEs in Nicaragua with mental health professionals and social workers focused specifically on crisis response.

"The presentation was on the nature of disasters and what to expect psychologically," said Purewal. "We discussed some early intervention techniques, psychological first aid and warning signs for those who may suffer from acute stress or PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)."

Rhodes and Purewal hope that by working with host nation mental health professional to address their concerns and offer best practice guidelines that they will be more prepared to effectively respond together in a crisis if needed.

Lyles added that the CP-15 mission is a very different experience compared to working from an office where patients come to you through a structured process of appointments.

"This mission is a great opportunity to see patients where they live, where they work and to collaborate with each country's providers about what works best in the field of mental health and then, at the end of the day, feeling as if you have done something very meaningful and helpful."

For the members of the mental health team, the time spent on the CP-15 mission has been very enlightening. Each has realized the need to be flexible, think outside the box and maximize opportunities.

"We look at our mission here as serving two

Right: HM2 Lashaunda Guy puts wristbands on patients waiting for medical care May 19 at a medical site set up at the Instituto Polytechnico Heroes y Martires.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis



HM1 Phillip Tinker from the ship's medical team interacts with patients through the registration site established at the Instituto Politecnico Heroes y Martires.



German Army Lt. Col. L. Alvarez, from Branch Hospital, performs a dental exam on a patient established at the Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius.

roles," said Rhodes. "We help patients stay healthy, and we also go to the host nation partners, and act as a liaison to medical sites and conduct outreach to have the chance to do business."

While in Nicaragua ,



Photo by MC2 Brittney Cannady
HM3 Renee Savier from NMCP guides patients in line May 22 at a medical site at the Instituto Polytecnico Heroes



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis
HM3 Laura Dimovici and HM3 Bryan Dimovici from NMCP conduct a health clinic May 21 at a medical site established at the Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius.

help the people on the ship
 out to work with our host
 as a referral source at the
 the SMEEs. We are proud
 both."

Comfort's embarked joint
 military and non-gov-
 ernmental organization
 volunteers worked side-by-
 side with partner nation
 military and civilian profes-

Right: HM3 Renee Savier from NMCP calls the next patient in line May 19 at a medical site set up at the Instituto Polytecnico Heroes y Martires.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis

sionals to conduct more than 400 dental exams and procedures, more than 1,200 optometry exams and 110 surgeries.

The CP-15 mission crew conducted subject matter expert exchanges on more than 100 topics with Nicaraguan counterparts. Collaboration efforts included a medical symposium at the Regional Governors Building that focused on diabetes, nutrition and childhood asthma, as well as a Preventive Medicine Health Fair at Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius focusing on oral hygiene and early childhood cavity prevention.

Seabees assigned to Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202 completed renovations and improvements at Escuela Publica Rigoberto Cabezas and Hospital Nuevo Amanecer, including plumbing repairs, electrical work and reinforcing foundations.

The Comfort crew also participated in two community relations events during the mission stop including painting the emergency room entrance to Hospital Nuevo Amanecer and playing softball with players from community leagues.

The U.S. Fleet Forces Band, "Uncharted Waters", performed concerts in Bilwi Central Park, Tupai Village and Boom Sirpi Village. The musicians also performed and conducted a musical workshop with 350 students at Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University.



Photo by MC1 Maddelin Angebrand
Lt. Gissella Martinez, a nurse anesthetist from NMCP, screens patients May 17 at a medical site set up at the Instituto Polytecnico Heroes y Martires.

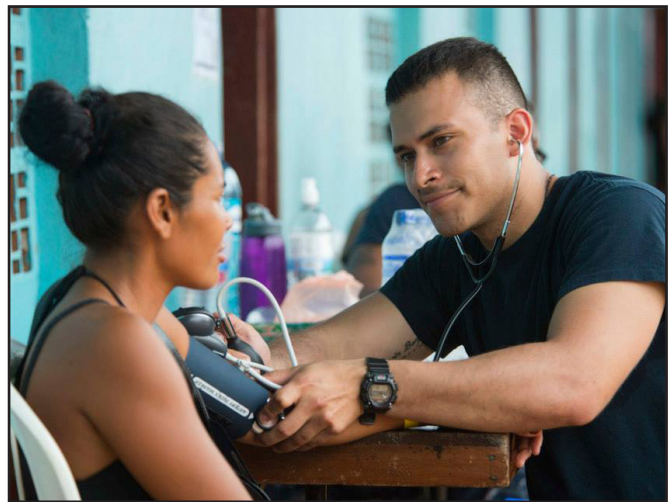


Photo by MC2 Derek Paumen
HN Ezequiel Gonzalez reads a patient's blood pressure May 22 at a medical site established at the Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius.



Photo by MCSN Deven Leigh Ellis
HM3 Hideyo Kusaro from NMCP takes a patient's blood pressure May 21 at a medical site established at the Colegio Moravo Juan Amos Comenius.

Comfort Departs Panama After Fifth Mission Stop

By MC1 (SW) Amy Kirk
Continuing Promise 2015 Public Affairs

USNS Comfort departed Colon, Panama, June 9 after completing its mission stop in support of Continuing Promise 2015. Government officials and residents thanked the crew for their efforts during a closing ceremony held pierside on June 7.

A local youth dance troupe performed traditional dances, and the regional band Instituto Benigno Jimenez Banda De Musica and the U.S. Fleet Forces Band, Uncharted Waters, played a variety of musical numbers.

CP-15 mission personnel worked alongside volunteers from Panama's Ministry of Health, government and medical professionals to provide residents with medical, dental and veterinary services.

These combined efforts resulted in the treatment of almost 14,000 patients at medical sites established at Centro Educativo Porfirio Melendez, Centro Educativo Dr. Augusto Samuel Boyd and Instituto Benigno Jimenez Garay. Surgical teams aboard Comfort completed 211 surgeries.

CP-15 personnel facilitated seminars on women's health and disaster response in addition to conducting a variety of subject matter expert exchanges with host-nation counterparts on more than 90 topics ranging from cardiac life support to mosquito control.

"A big part of the SMEEs is to establish open communication and create reliable networks with the host nation," said Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Luke Peet, a preventive medicine technician assigned to Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek. "When we make strides working together, it becomes easier to find solutions to issues and concerns in the region."

Midshipmen Shadow Medical Officers during CP-15

Comfort is groups of midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy during Continuing Promise, with five aboard for the stop in Panama. They are furthering their professional develop-



Photo by MC2 Brittney Cannady

HM3 Osvaldo Castro, center, from NMCP, and HM3 Maria Reyes take a patient's blood pressure May 29.



Photo by Army Spc. Lance Hartung

HM3 Kristina Starcruiser of NMCP works with a Panamanian veterinary technician to perform an exam on a dog May 31 at a veterinary site established at Roberto Mariano Bula Sports Complex.

ment as future leaders of the fleet by learning about the various aspects of the humanitarian mission and working alongside crew members both aboard the hospital ship and ashore.

The current group aboard Comfort said they have enjoyed their time on the ship and have been impressed with the mission-first mindset and personable demeanor of the ship's crew.

The midshipmen have been shadowing medical officers, who provide mentorship as well as share experiences about underway operations and life in the Navy as a medical provider.

"We could give them a lecture on humanitarian and disaster operations, but it won't mean nearly as much as witnessing firsthand the patient who has problems performing his job because of the hernia he has been living with for 20 years," said Lt. Cmdr. Ryan Restrepo, a third year surgical resident assigned to Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, and 2004 Naval Academy graduate. "When the midshipmen get to assist in an operation that will change a patient's life, they will return back to Annapolis with a sense of accomplishment that far exceeds what can be



Photo by MC1 James Stenberg

HN Briana Mitchell from NMCP, right, assists orthopedic surgeon Capt. William Todd with bandaging a Panamanian patient during surgery May 31.



Photo by Spc. Lance Hartung

HN Jordon Oates, left, and HN Joanna Castillo, both assigned to NMCP, color with patients in the pre-operation ward aboard USNS Comfort.

taught in the classroom.”

Restrepo added he has no doubt the experience the midshipmen gain on this mission will motivate them in their future medical studies as they prepare for their commissions at the conclusion of their senior year.

Thus far in the CP-15 mission, the midshipmen have scrubbed into surgeries, triaged patients at medical sites ashore, and worked in the ship's sick bay.

“Lifechanging” is the word all five students used to describe the work being done as part of CP-15. Each member noted the gratitude of the patients, the smiles on the faces, and said they will carry memories from the mission with them for the rest of their lives.



Photo by Spc. Lance Hartung

Lt. Taylor Pince, a registered nurse assigned to NMCP, transports a patient to the post-operative ward aboard USNS Comfort.



Photo by Pfc. Tomarius Roberts

UT2 Serina Espinoza of Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202 and HN Nicholas Brown of NMCP prepare to paint walls at Centro Medico Patricia Duncan during an engineering project June 4.

The midshipmen agree the CP-15 mission has served to reinforce their decision to pursue a medical career in the Navy, but also piqued their interest in global health care.

After completing the mission stop in Panama, Comfort transited through the Panama Canal as it headed to the next mission stop in El Salvador.

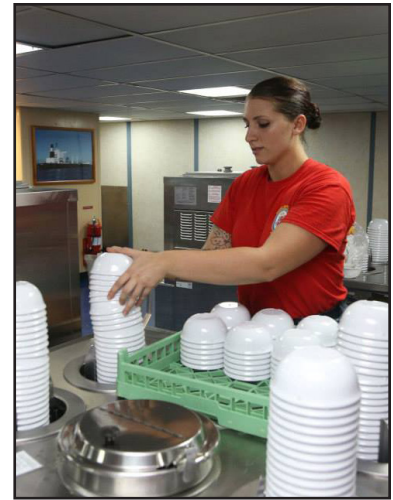


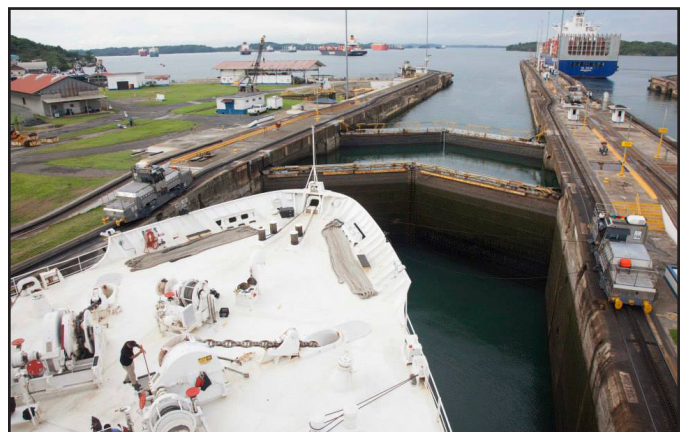
Photo by Spc. Lance Hartung

HM3 Class Kenna Loren from NMCP organizes bowls on the mess decks June 8.



Photo by MC2 Brittney Cannady

SHSN Nina Anton of NMCP speaks with a Panamanian citizen after a softball game May 31.



U.S. Navy photo by SFC Peter Yokel

USNS Comfort transits the Panama Canal June 9 on its way from the mission stop in Panama to El Salvador.

Graduation for NMCP's Internal Medicine Residents Signifies Next Step as Internists

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MC2 (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth's Internal Medicine Residency Program Class of 2015 celebrated their graduation with a ceremony at Hospital Point on June 19 amid friends, family and colleagues. After three years of residency, the doctors are prepared to see patients as independent internists.

Internal Medicine physicians, called internists, are specialists skilled in the management of patients who have conditions that affect multiple organs or the entire body. They are involved in multiple aspects of care, from prevention and diagnosis to the treatment of adult diseases.

"The residency program prepared us well to become independent internists, comfortable assisting in the care of patients across a broad spectrum of specialties," said Lt. Samira Zamani, one of the graduating residents. "We are very comfortable dealing with patients who have multi-system complicated disease processes. The three years in the program have really helped me prepare for my next assignment."

As the residents are preparing for that first assignment as internists at naval hospitals across the country, the Internal Medicine Residency Program director reminded them they are still on a journey of education. To emphasize his point, Capt. Joseph Sposato quizzed the graduates and guests on various time frames throughout history, asking them what mattered about the dates.

"It's not the first date that is important, and it's not the last," he stated. "What matters is the dash in between. The dash determines who you are, what you've done and what people

remember you for.

"Today is not the end of your training or education, it's the beginning," Sposato continued. "It's the first day. From here on out, you will speak with confidence and assurance. I encourage you to take that forward and remember you are building that dash every day. I congratulate you on all of your accomplishments."

During his speech, Sposato said that as program director, he used the significance of the dash to send the graduates with one last bit of wisdom. The guest speaker, retired Capt. Joseph Kennedy, carried the theme of wisdom and presented a top 10 list of underappreciated bits of wisdom to the graduates.

"Take time for your family and yourself, treasure input from others and keep your priorities straight," Kennedy said. "One that always gets me out of bed is that 80 percent of effectiveness is in showing up."

His final thought for the graduates was to never underestimate graduating.

"You have graduated many times," Kennedy said. "Kindergarten, high school, college and medical school, but this is your ultimate graduation. You are now endorsed and soon you will be certified. You are trusted now more than ever. Stay alert and assimilate wisdom wherever you find it."

The residents were then presented graduation certificates and Jefferson cups by Sposato and Cmdr. Michael Galitz, chair of Medicine. During the presentation, Sposato talked

— See **INTERNAL**, next page



Although the residents have been through many graduations, the guest speaker, retired Capt. Joseph Kennedy, said this one is the most important of all.



Capt. Joseph Sposato, Internal Medicine Residency program director, quizzes the graduates and the audience about various time frames throughout history, noting the most important piece was neither of the dates, but the dash in between.

ER GRAD — *Continued from page 5*
ing, growing and trying to be a better physician.

"There are lots of things we get to do in the ER that make people feel better immediately, but you have to be humble," Juliano said. "All our patients and family members are expecting you to not only be a good physician, but a great one."

"You have the ability to take care of them, which is an enormous level of trust," Juliano added. "It is a privilege to be a doctor in the ER. You've earned it now, but don't take it for granted."

Guest speaker Cmdr. Jose Henao, senior medical officer Naval Special Warfare Development Group, informed

the graduates about the importance of self-reflection, family and being a competent, humble provider.

"I learned some important life lessons that I'd like to share with you today," Henao said. "Looking back, I realized without the support of my family, friends and children, I would have never been able to make it through."

Henao said it is our spouses who are taking care of the home and children while we are away, and it is the children who sit up at night missing us, because we are at work. Never forget what an important role your family plays in your life and in your success."

Amidst his self-reflection, Henao

notes the importance of listening.

"I have learned how much it means for a patient to have a competent, passionate provider who cares



Guest speaker Cmdr. Jose Henao speaks to the importance of never forgetting that family comes first.

about their patients," Henao said. "It is important in our specialty, because we see our patients often in their worst physical and mental state of health. It's paramount for you to be confident and humble providers."

The residents, who are now newly appointed specialists in emergency medicine, will continue on to different assignments and continue to provide emergency medicine care for their patients.



The seven residents listen to guest speaker Cmdr. Jose Henao during the graduation ceremony.

INTERNAL — *Continued from previous page*

about the importance of the Jefferson cup. Sposato explained that Thomas Jefferson gave such cups to his family, and also one to his physician to symbolize his trust in him. Each year, the internal medicine residents are presented with a cup as a reminder of their time at NMCP and that they are part of the NMCP family.

Most of the residents will become internists at the naval hospitals in Pensacola and Jacksonville, Florida; Great Lakes, Illinois; Beaufort, South Carolina; and Twentynine Palms, California; while one will remain at NMCP to become chief of residents.



NMCP's Internal Medicine Residency Program Class of 2015, from left, Lt. Samira Zamani, Lt. Christopher Boyer, Lt. Cmdr. Todd Hansen, Lt. Justin Stark, Lt. Joshua Bloomberg, Lt. Jeffery Moore, Lt. Amber Brittain and Lt. Joyce Hall.

Four NMCP Chiefs Frocked to Senior Chief

STORY AND PHOTO BY
MC₂ (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

Four Naval Medical Center Portsmouth chief petty officers stood at attention June 9 with the chapel overflowing with guests as their frocking ceremony began. Capt. Darin K. Via, NMCP commanding officer, presented each chief with their frocking letter – allowing them to assume the rights and responsibilities of a senior chief petty officer.

Via said that frocking these Sailors to senior chief was humbling and exciting; that they put on this rank not only because of what they have accomplished, but also because of what is expected of them as senior chiefs. He urged them to do two things: to keep charging hard so we can see two stars on their covers and to reach out to their junior Sailors: help them and bring them along for the future of the Navy.

Following the presentation of the letter, each chief, one by one, faced the guests as their families joined them on stage to pin on their new collar devices and place their cover. Each newly pinned senior chief took a moment to share their gratitude and what this pinning meant to them.

Newly frocked Senior Chief Sonar Technician Surface (SW) Brad Goulden attributed his success to others. “It’s the support, leadership and mentorship from my peers and Sailors. Thank you for the support at home, I couldn’t have done this without you.”



Capt. Darin Via, left, and CMDCM (FMF/SW/AW/DV) Eric Anderson present NMCP’s newest senior chiefs. From left, STGCS (SW) Brad Goulden, HMCS (FMF/SW) Matthew Snider, SHCS (SW/AW) Tracy Thresher and HMCS (SW/AW) John Zettlemoyer.

Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (FMF/SW) Matthew Snider said, “Thank you for the opportunity to lead my team, thank you to my mentors – we all know they don’t tell us what they want to hear. They tell us what we need to hear, and thank you to my wife for being my support and taking care of everything when I am away.”

The support from family and Sailors throughout their career was a recurring theme among the new senior chiefs.

— See **SENIOR**, next page



SHCM (SW/AW) Noversong Vitug places SHCS (SW/AW) Tracy Thresher’s new senior chief cover.



HMCS (FMF/SW) Matthew Snider’s wife and son pin on his senior chief anchors.

Happy 117th birthday to the Navy Hospital Corps

Naval Medical Center Portsmouth hosted a ceremony June 17 in the galley to celebrate and read the birthday wishes from the Navy surgeon general, force master chief, and chiefs of the Nurse Corps, Medical Corps, Medical Service Corps and Dental Corps. After a few words from CMDCM (FMF/SW/

AW/DV) Eric Anderson, command master chief, and Capt. Darin Via, NMCP commanding officer, the cake was cut by the medical center's most senior corpsman, Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Sonia Bethea, and the most junior corpsman, Hospitalman Recruit Carl Brotherton.

NMCP's most senior corpsman, HMCS Sonia Bethea, and the most junior corpsman, HR Carl Brotherton, cut the birthday cake.



Cmdr. Lonnie Hosea, the associate director for Nursing Services, gives the message from the chief of the Nurse Corps, Rear Adm. Rebecca McCormick-Boyle, who stated that the Navy Nurse Corps enjoys a strong partnership with the Hospital Corps shipmates and that they are honored to serve with all of the "Docs" in a diverse setting, both in and out of theater.

SENIOR — Continued from previous page

Senior Chief Ship's Serviceman (SW/AW) Tracy Thresher said, "To my junior Sailors thank you for what you do on daily basis, without you none of us would be up here today. Thank you to my family for all of the support."

Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman (SW/AW) John Zettlemoyer said, "I want to echo everybody's thank you, to my leadership for allowing me to lead – thank you from bottom of my heart. Thank you to the mess, my Sailors and my family." To

his wife, he said, "I spent a lot of time away from home, I really thank you for everything you've done."

Command Master Chief (FMF/SW/AW/DV) Eric Anderson spoke to guests about becoming a leader.

"It just goes to show, they thanked their leadership, talked about Sailors they've led, then they talk about family. That's how you build a leader, you need those pillars to ground you and build you up," Anderson said. "It takes a village to raise a child, it takes the Navy – junior sailors, chief mess and wardroom, to build leaders like we have here."



STGCS (SW) Brad Goulden's children pin on his senior chief anchors.



Standing proudly, HMCS (SW/AW) John Zettlemoyer smiles after his wife places his cover.



Capt. Darin Via, commanding officer, and CMDCM (FMF/SW/AW/DV) Eric Anderson with Branch Health Clinic Dam Neck's newest petty officers.

They were HM1 Nicholas Belflower, HM2 David Mayes, HM2 Thati Vang, HM2 Brittany Young, HM2 Elisabeth Vasile, HM3 Daniela Guerra, HM3 Rebecca Andrews and HM3 Jesse McGaha.

NMCP, Branch Health Clinics Welcome Newest Petty Officers

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MC₂ (SW) TERAH L. BRYANT
NMCP Public Affairs

During multiple frocking ceremonies June 4 and 5, the commanding officer of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth encouraged each Sailor to bring someone with them on their journey of success.

Capt. Darin K. Via, commanding officer, frocked 85 Sailors in the four ceremonies: the first three ceremonies at area branch health clinics and the fourth at NMCP. In all, three Sailors were frocked to first class, 27 to second class and 55 to third class petty officers.

"Go out, find a protégé and teach them what you know, help them grow," Via said. "Bring them along for the ride, so that next cycle, they are standing up

here."

Via and Command Master Chief (FMF/SW/AW/DV) Eric Anderson traveled to the branch health clinics at Naval Station Norfolk, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story and Dam Neck Annex June 4, where they frocked 28 Sailors. Via pinned on each Sailor's right collar insignia while family and friends placed their Sailor's left collar device.

"This is a very well-deserved milestone for all of you," Anderson said. "Use this as a stepping stone; don't stop, don't rest, keep working forward."

The next day, NMCP's auditorium was packed with friends and family as 55 Sailors were frocked during the medical center's ceremony. Sailors marched in formation and were called one by one to

the stage. Greeted by Via, Capt. Bradford Smith, executive officer, and Master Chief Hospital Corpsman (EXW/FMF/SW) Aaron VanDall, acting command master chief, each Sailor was presented with their frocking letter and a handshake - congratulating them on their selection.

For newly frocked Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class (FMF) Shane Dixon, paying it forward was already part of his plan.

"I had a good amount of mentors, at home and in the Navy, who pushed me and continuously built me up," Dixon said. "Putting on second class allows me to actually lead Sailors now; I'm in a position to bring them up with me."

In his remarks, Via told the auditorium's standing-room-only crowd that one of the top three things he enjoys about being commanding officer is frocking Sailors.

"It gets me out to see the great Sailors we have," Via said. "We have the best Sailors in the world. Thank you for what you do every day."

The frocking ceremony, where Sailors assume the title, responsibilities and the right to wear the uniform of their next rank, is a Navy tradition. Sailors are then advanced in pay over the course of three cycles throughout the year.



Capt. Darin Via, commanding officer, congratulates Branch Health Clinic Norfolk's newest petty officers.

AWARDS

MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL

Capt. Kimberly Davis
 Capt. Mark Honig
 Capt. Denise Johnson
 Capt. David Klink
 Capt. Craig Zelig
 Cmdr. Teresa Allen
 Cmdr. David Chacon
 Cmdr. Jeffery Johnson
 Cmdr. Jose Pedroza

NAVY & MARINE CORPS COMMENDATION MEDAL

Cmdr. John Glass
 Lt. Cmdr. John Alex
 Lt. Cmdr. Priscilla Del Carpio
 Lt. Cmdr. James Corbett
 Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Gresens
 Lt. Cmdr. Rose Jolly
 Lt. Cmdr. Jesse Rohloff
 Lt. Angel Camacho
 Lt. John Gardner
 Lt. Reynaldo Jornacion
 Lt. Medardo Martin
 Lt. Shaun Ostrofe
 Lt. Lamont Simmons
 Lt. Jamie York
 CSCS (SW) Tracey Mayweather
 HMC (FMF) Mark Chesney
 HMC Michael Ferretta
 QMC (SW) Jenita Myers
 HM1 (SW) Jeremy Gibson
 HM1 (SW) Latasha Williams

JOINT SERVICE ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

HM2 Travis Hendy

NAVY & MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL

Lt. Cmdr. George Hnath
 Lt. Cmdr. Luke Nicholas
 Lt. Cmdr. Krista Puttler
 Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Rose
 Lt. Renea Beggs
 Lt. Denise Beyer
 Lt. Ricky Caperton
 Lt. Jenny Held
 Lt. Melissa Mather
 Lt. Susanna Sutherland
 Lt. Frank Villaume
 Lt. Larry Yatchak
 Lt. j.g. Simon Conrad
 Lt. j.g. Crystal Woody
 SH2 (SW) Joseph Anderson
 IT2 Summer Cunningham
 CS2 (SW) Calvin Hardy
 IC2 (SW) Danielle Scott
 CE2 (SCW) Dustin Wise
 HM3 (FMF) Benjamin Ganther
 HM3 Connor Rezac
 HM3 Sean Uzokwe
 HN James Parks

NAVY MERITORIOUS CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD

Ritchie Blanford
 May Perez
 Robert Wittmann

MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE MEDAL

HN Faron Mitchell
 HM1 (FMF) Ann-Marie Rippentrop
 HM3 Christopher Robinson



The monthly command award ceremony on June 4 recognized 35 staff, which included one Meritorious Service Medal, one Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, six Good Conduct Medals, one Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, six certificates for 10 years in service, five certificates for 20 years in service, five certificates for 30 years in service, two certificates for 40 years in service. Three were recognized for being appointed to the command's Color Guard. Here are some of those honored.

SHIPMATE OF THE MONTH



Photos by MC2 (SW) Terah Bryant

HN DERRICK PACE, DSS
HN ALLISON SCOTT, DPHS
HN ZACHARY SHIPMAN, DMH
HN RUCHELL PERRY, DNS
HM₃ DONNIE WRIGHT, DCSS

HN JUNIOR COFRESI, DMS
PSSR VIRGINIA BRYANT, DFA
HM₃ HAJA ISATA KABBA, DPE
HN IAN MWASHUMA, DPC
HT₂ LAKEISHA PARKER, COMMAND SUITE

MENTOR OF THE MONTH

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class (SW/AW) Loany M. Saldivar has worked at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth since December 2011 and she is a command career counselor, as well as the directorate leading petty officer for the Command Suite.

Her job as a career counselor is to ensure Sailors have the best retention eligibility, which also aligns with the Navy's needs.

"I have the privilege of leading Sailors who provide career opportunity guidance and counseling to others in the command," Saldivar said.

As the directorate leading petty officer, she also has an opportunity to lead others outside of her rate and to develop her skill sets. Saldivar mentors four Sailors in the command and two who recently transferred.

"I would like to think

that my contribution to the Mentorship Program is one that will continue to benefit others, as those who I have mentored move up the ranks and excel in their own endeavors," Saldivar said.

According to Saldivar, mentorship has been around for many years; the program simply reinforces its importance.

"From the E-1 to the O-10, mentorship brings those seeking goals with those who have already succeeded in attaining that particular objective. There is someone out there either professionally or personally who has already attained

what we want, so why not seek their guidance," Saldivar stated.

She became a mentor because the mentors throughout her career made her want to mentor others. It's a way to pay it forward, while making a difference in someone else's life.

Saldivar believes you should mentor because you genuinely have an interest in another person's success. This is also what motivates her.

"Accomplishments motivate me! Whether they are my own accomplishments or others accomplishments, they are the stepping stones to everything in life," Saldivar said.

To her, a good mentor is one who has the courage to provide a nonbiased perspective and who can guide someone without jeopardizing their own character or their protégées.

"Be committed, trustworthy and know that it's ok to challenge them when a situation necessitates it," she said.

Would you like to become a mentor or find a mentor? Check out the Mentor Program on the Intranet to find valuable information about mentoring at NMCP. Go to the directory website map and look under "M" to learn more and join the Mentor Program today. Everyone is welcome.



Photos by MC2 (SW) Terah Bryant